

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 L-02 PRS-01 DODE-00 DPW-01 IO-03

SSO-00 /059 W

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R 231020Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8317

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 18349

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS VS

SUBJ: PUBLIC INFORMATION SERIES RELEASE ON CIVILIAN PRISONERS

REF: A. SAIGON 18000; B. STATE 205568

FOR EA/VN

1. THE QUESTION OF THE DIFFICULTIES SURROUNDING DEPTS TREATMENT OF CIVILIAN PRISONERS WAS THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED WITH STEARNS DURING HIS VISIT. THERE IS IN POUCH A LETTER FROM BENNETT REITERATING THOSE CONCERNS. IT OCCURS TO US THAT IF THE DEPT FEELS COMPELLED TO RELEASE SOMETHING IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT SAIGON A-240 OF OCTOBER 17. ALTHOUGH IT IS CLASSIFIED LOU A CAREFUL REVIEW MIGHT DETERMINE MOST OF ITS CONTENT COULD BE REGARDED AS UNCLASSIFIED AND PERHAPS USED IN THE PIS SERIES. WE ANTICIPATE SOME OBJECTIONS THAT ITS CONTENT IS "UNBALANCED". THAT IS PROBABLY TRUE. THE INFORMATION IS FACTUAL AND THEREFORE DOES NOT UNCRITICALLY REPEAT NVN PROPAGANDA IN AN ATTEMPT TO BE "CREDIBLE". IF NOT USEFUL FOR PIS SERIES, CONSIDERATION MIGHT BE GIVEN TO ISSUING IT IN SOME FORM AS GENERAL BACKGROUND FOR ALL POSTS ABROAD.

2. IF EA/VN IS EXPERIENCING REAL DIFFICULTY WITH CORRESPONDENCE,
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INCLUDING CONGRESSIONAL, ON PRISONERS EA/VN MIGHT CONSIDER

SENDING ONE PARAGRAPH INTERIM REPLY SAYING IT IS FORWARDING THE LETTER TO THE EMB IN SAIGON ASKING IT TO REPLY DIRECTLY. WE ARE NOT ANXIOUS TO ASSUME THIS ADDITIONAL LOAD, BUT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO OUR HAVING TO PICK UP THE PIECES RESULTING FROM WASHINGTON'S CURRENT DEVOTION TO "BALANCE".

3. WE ASSUME DEPT AWARE THAT DON LUCE IS ON HIS WAY TO HANOI TO VISIT "LIBERATED AREAS" IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. RUMOR HERE IS THAT LE DUC THO IS CONSIDERING GIVING HIS HALF OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE TO DON LUCE TO ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO ENABLE INDOCHINA RESOURCES GROUP TO CONTINUE ITS BALANCED PRESENTATION OF INDOCHINESE AFFAIRS IN WASHINGTON. CAN YOU CONFIRM?
MARTIN

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NNN

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